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The MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

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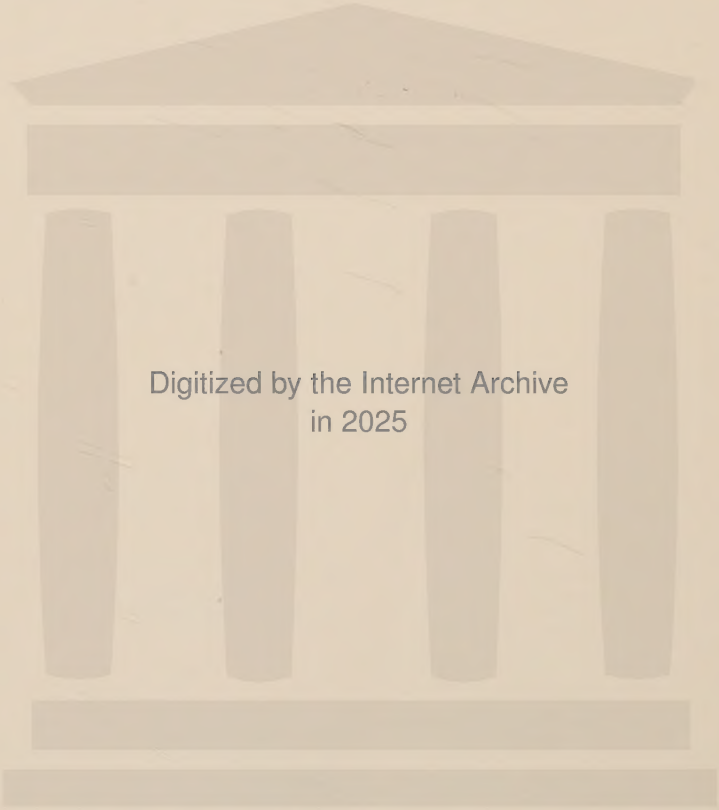
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When Gaius Glenn Atkins spoke in 1948 in Boston at a celebration in honor of his eightieth birthday, he revealed an understandable self-consciousness about his advancing years, as he frequently did in his subsequent writings for the QUARTERLY.

Referring to those who had been his ministerial colleagues through the more active years of his ministry, he said, ". . . and now, though most of those with whom I began have been welcomed by them on the other shore, I hear them still . . ."

We

Since the last issue of the QUARTERLY, this beloved member and sage of our fellowship has been welcomed "on the other shore," with joy and felicity we are sure.

It is a striking fact that there is no man in our denomination who has not been in fact his contemporary, for his years of ministering have spanned the years of all of us now serving Congregational churches. Moreover, there

Hear

are few among us who have not been moved or touched by the sensitive appreciations revealed in his widely-circulated writings.

We have asked another distinguished member of our clerical fraternity, a close friend and co-worker of Dr. Atkins, Dr. Frederick L. Fagley, for the benefit of readers of the QUARTERLY to recall some of the salient counsel of Dr. Atkins. The results of his efforts begin on page 4 of

Him

this issue.

The QUARTERLY is an especially appropriate place to make such a recall, for Dr. Atkins was the initiator, the sustainer, and moving spirit of the QUARTERLY. The QUARTERLY was, of course, only one of Dr. Atkins' creative contributions to the life of our fellowship. That his contributions to the QUARTERLY were a distinguishing

Still

feature, we never doubted. As late as a few days before his death, we received letters advising us never to give up his offerings. We never intended to. On the contrary, as in recent weeks we have re-read many of his counsels to his clerical brethren through the years, we have been reminded of how worthy they were of our careful attention and of how incalculable is our loss.

It remains for us to say, "We hear him still."

—EDITOR

Excerpts

—from our correspondence

The following letter is in response to an item which appeared in the last QUARTERLY *under the title "Ministers need Ministers, too." —Ed.*

To the Editor:

Nothing is truer than the title, *"Ministers Need Ministers, Too"* and few of us find any to minister to us. The lack of opportunity for sharing deep thoughts and concerns with other ministers is one of the weakest parts of our fellowship. The groups and the individual ministers with whom I could thus share can be numbered on the fingers of one hand.

Your correspondent mentions five vital areas in which he is seeking:

(1) **Is what the minister is doing worth while?** As a chaplain in a general hospital overseas I visited every day in wards filled with wounded. I found that men who had not been near a church since dropping out of Sunday School at age twelve, nevertheless had so much more faith, so much more to build on as they tried to explain and search for strength to endure what had happened to them than had their fellow-wounded with no formal religious training, that I was greatly encouraged about the sometimes hard-to-see results of our church school teaching.

We cannot preach or teach the gospel faithfully without helping some, though we may never know it. The heart of it all is the preaching and teaching—and living.

(2) **"That God and His purposes are real."** (?) Unless God understands this world and can control it and unless He has some purpose in doing so, nothing makes sense. This is essentially a venture of faith, but I choose to believe that God knows what He is about and that the Bible and Jesus reveal some of that to us. Though I admit my vision is dim at times.

(3) **"That His will is revealed and can be discovered."** This is bringing God's purposes down to us. God reveals His will to us in part by putting desires, aspirations, hopes into our heart. This is the foundation of our "call" to the ministry. It takes time, thought and prayer to evaluate and interpret these.

God also guides and reveals His will through things that happen to us. I once accepted a call, the chief attraction of which, was a larger salary, I thought I desperately needed. This did not work out well at all. I believe this was God revealing His will to me that I should not have accepted that call.

At another time there came to me a call to a field where the chief recommendation was the need, the financial situation being such that several others had refused to consider it. Having learned my lesson I took this opportunity and a glorious pastorate resulted.

God's will can be discovered. It is a reality. But is any discovery easy? Let's not talk about it glibly, especially when we counsel with young people.

(*Continued on last page*)

DR. GAIUS GLENN ATKINS

FREDERICK L. FAGLEY

GLENN ATKINS, as he always was pleased to be known, was the editor of THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY from its beginning twenty years ago and guided it with consummate skill and devotion. His editorials, written with great care, afforded him a channel of communication with our fellowship of ministers in which he took high satisfaction. From the beginning he sought out young ministers as writers. He often said, "Let us give these young men a chance to reach a larger audience."

Dr. Atkins had a nation-wide reputation as minister, teacher, and author. His books on Christian teachings and on the history of religion are found on the shelves of the libraries of many ministers both here and abroad.

There was in all he wrote a vivid reflection of his matured mind and of his deep Christian faith, giving evidence of vital, personal religion—expressed with a graciousness that charmed, enlightened, and uplifted all those who through his works were privileged to share his thought and spirit.

Dr. Atkins was at home in both the seen and the unseen world. The mysteries of heaven were revealed to him and through him made real to us. And the earth, with its many voices, spoke through him, bringing one closer to nature and to nature's God. There are multitudes who have been blessed by his writings, who have entered into a deepening spiritual experience, never to be forgotten.

Rather than try to characterize his wisdom and grace of expression, I am letting him speak in his own words on a few topics that were central in his thought.

(*Continued next page*)

The Voice of Nature and of Nature's God

My first contact with him was in 1910 when he came to Oberlin for the baccalaureate sermon. He was then the young minister of the First Church, Detroit, and was already recognized as one of America's leading preachers. No sermon among all that I have heard has more deeply influenced my life. Like him, I had grown up on a farm and in the solitudes of long days of solitary labor my mind had been exercised in contemplating the wondrous works of nature. But he brought an understanding and a luster to God's relationship to all that I had seen and known.

After a few short sentences relative to the occasion, he turned our thought to God's handiwork in creation, where one might secure the sense of oneness with God, to the refreshment of his soul. He spoke of an experience of standing above the beautiful Yosemite Valley and the thoughts that there came to him. Later he expressed his thoughts in these words:

> All that the Creator had of fire and wind and earthquake had been there in long employ. The buckling of the earth's crust had twisted and crumpled and broken and folded back the strata of the rock as a man twists a piece of paper in his hand. The very rock upon which I stood had been recast in interior fires. Those distant peaks had been lifted out of a kind of cosmic agony. The valley whose profundities opened at my feet had been worn by torrential waters acting almost through eons and their guardian domes had been shaped and polished by the slow pressure of ice acting through millenniums.
>
> Yes, the God of fire and wind and earthquake had left his mark across all those horizons, but the second wonder was the wonder of a new beauty and peace which had come in to possess and make its own all that aforetime had been worn and cleft and crushed. There were no sounds save the far-off music of falling waters, or the lyric note of the thrush. The floods which had worn the valley were shrunk to tremulous falling waters, which through the very immensity of their fall were beaten into mist, reaching the earth only as something diaphanous and insubstantial—no longer water at all—but only, as it were, the soul of the stream, rising again as though to seek its source, and changed by sunlight into rainbow splendors. The trees, which lifted themselves from the plateau, had grown through a thousand years of peace and the sky which arched it all was untouched by the cloud. Surely, if ever the still, small voice of God could speak through things to the soul of a man it spoke there that morning, proclaiming as distinctly as Elijah ever heard, that the ultimate God is not in wind, or fire, or earthquake, but in the gentle, the unseen, and what reaches and changes the soul.

Many years later, he wrote in one of his meditations for the FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER:

> Those who glimpse the stars only from city streets and through the smoke of factory chimneys get at best but poor intimations of milky ways and star-gemmed constellations. And yet seen from quiet open places, the late winter constellations mount toward the zenith, the dormant fields are clothed with a mystic glory borrowed from the skies, and the heavens declare the glory of God. Our sense of God is like that. The murk of life darkens it; crowds and pleasures and cares and feverish occupation cloud our vision. It is well to get away—sometimes, from the crowded ways of life to be rebaptized in the sense of the Eternal. We may even thank God for the shadows if thereby we may gain a new vision of his stars and share anew their peace.

The FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER, which he wrote for fourteen years abounded in references to the great out-of-doors. In our intimate relationship over many long years there were times when he would sit quietly musing by the lakeside, or seaside or on our mountain, and there begin talking with these words, "Don't you see, Fred, how God speaks to us in myriad ways." I recall one day how he plucked a blade of grass and looking at it he began to talk in words of mystic beauty. Later he put his thought of that day in a meditation:

> Grasses have been from of old the symbol of the frail and fugitive: actually they have outlasted epochs and empires. They nourish all life above their own low levels. They heal earth's scars, redeem battlefields, turn dust into beauty. They are valiant against the winds, persistent against drouth and with their humble wealth enrich a continent.
>
> So many people are like that. Their humble, un-noted labor redeems the havocs of pride and power, their patience and goodness are the grass-roots of civilization. Their sorely tried spirits have an imperishable beauty and like the grasses teach us anew how near the mercy of God is to us.

The Voice of God

To him God was always very near:

> We need not distrust the still, small voice of God, nor think it impotent. It is really the mightiest force in our world. For once a man's conscience is gripped and his love secured and his deeper self set free, the man becomes such a force as nothing under the stars can equal. Only the still, small voice can reach and possess the springs of life, but once you have reached and possessed these, you have the whole of life, its cities and its states, its laws and its governors, aye, you possess the whole.

Once having heard the voice we have need to ponder much upon its meanings, and above all to obey its commands. All this is not mysticism nor any giving up of duty nor any sheer reducing of life to quiet dreams. It is rather the recognition that personal ends can be reached only by personal means; that our world of human relationship can be changed only through the change of tempers and attitudes; that life can be changed only from the inside, and that, after all, the only thing that can pass the locked portals of the heart is a voice. It may be that what has escaped us down the beaten, trampled, reddened roads which we have lately followed may come to meet us if we take this road and lead the world back to the God of loving, quiet, inner and all conquering things—if only we have heard the still, small voice and wait obedient before it. For God does his work in the hidden places of life, and deals with the sources of things, and is willing to wait on the threshold of the door of our soul until he has his way with us, not by the power of his might, but by the mightiness of his loving patience.

The Way of Christ

Christ had no method but the quiet revelation of personality to personality, the quiet appeal of soul to soul. There was no clamor in his life save the clamor of those who contended against him, nor the sound of any blows save as the nails were driven into his hands; nor had he any weapon at all, save the cross upon which they crucified him. And yet, in the very gentle stillness of his life there was a twofold power—the power of such a life to reveal the ultimate God—the power of such a life to transform the world—if only we shall be taught of it and arm ourselves with his weapons.

The Life of Man

The discovery of self, of God and of duty are the three aspects of the discovery by which life is at once emancipated and empowered. This discovery is the keystone which supports the arch of our lives. Yet we are so greatly possessed by our sense of triumphs in the region of scientific discovery and material possession, that we are tempted to see life only in terms of the temporal and the senses, and not at all, to quote the august Latin phrase, under the appearance of the eternal.

Life does not grow more simple with the passing years, but its deeper needs are unchanging. The secret of peace is not to be sought at the end of the road, but in the spirit in which we journey. It is to be sought in the consciousness of the sustaining love of a God who is committed, by the very nature of His Godhead, to a real participation in all our strife; who does not release us from the battle, but who shares the fight; who does not set us free from the possibility of pain and tears, but who feels the hurt of our wounds, the salt bitterness of our sorrow; who spends Himself, not only with us, but for us, and in the travail of redemptive passion anticipates the victories of the spirit. And finally whatever pilgrimage we undertake must be undertaken, in spite of the interior loneliness of all great spiritual processes, in the comradeship of our kind and all well-being must always be our goal. We are never to forget that we are all so tied up in

one bundle that peace and reconciliations in which others are not involved are quite impossible. A note of service is deepened in our care for those who lie wounded or broken along the road we shall forget our own wounds and our own wearinesses. So conceived, so re-enforced, life is never impossible, but does indeed become, so these books and leaders teach us, an adventure whose greatness is its own best justification and whose difficulties may become for the faithful and discerning but stairs of ascent to radiant and triumphant regions.

We can be colonists of ideals; colonists of justice, of peace, of a nobler world, of the kingdom of God. We can set up their standards in an order which forgets or denies them, and say to stupidity, pride, and cruel power, 'We do not belong to you. We are colonists of something braver and better, and our task and challenge is to make it real. There is our true homeland. It is already in our thought, our vision, our faith, our purpose. Tomorrow's tomorrow, please God, if there are enough of us, it will be in our world.

The Dignity of Labor

Religion has always, from the very dawn of faith, consecrated labor and made it a comradeship. The recovery of that truth has marked an epoch in the life of the modern church. For what God has joined together no society or industrial system can safely put apart. Religion is not the opiate of unrewarded labor, it is the enduement of it with dignity and meaning, the investment of its relationships with justice, the enrichment of its toil with comradeships, and the hallowing of all toil, till the simplest task is touched with spiritual beauty. O Thou who hast shared with us the enterprises of thy still unfinished creation and made us fellow craftsmen, not only with each other but with thee, forgive us all that embitters our ways with our fellow workers. We thank thee for every skill and strength. May we hold them as a trust and accept what they bring us as from thy hand.

The Sanctity of The Home

A home is a house which has become a habit of the spirit. A house thus loved and lived in becomes more than wood or stone. Its rooms grow rich in memory. Its walls, tested by many storms, assure us; its thresholds are hospitality; order is its beauty; contentment its blessing; goodness its crown, and its foundations support the structure of society. It needs many kinds of peace to make a peaceable habitation; an inner peace for each indweller; the peace of love and comradeship; the peace of economic security; the peace of the state—and 'the peace of God which passeth understanding.

THE MINISTER AND THE PARISH

Editor: ARTHUR PRESTON COLBURN
Pawtucket Congregational Church
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

THE MINISTER AND THE DIRECTOR

by MARGARET M. MORTON

SEVERAL YEARS AGO at the annual gathering of the International Council of Religious Education in Cleveland, representing many denominations across the U.S. and Canada, a session was held in a huge ballroom. The leader started to break the ice in a chatty way and then asked us to divide into groups of six and for six minutes discuss the question, "What is the most serious problem we face in religious education?"

We threw ourselves into circles and into fast discussion. The gavel came down. We straightened ourselves out into rows again and the presiding officer said, "Would one of the spokesmen like to tell us what problem was decided on in his group?"

Someone popped up and said, "The relationship between the minister and the director."

The presiding officer asked, "How many groups decided on that problem as the most serious?"

It seemed that every group in the room had decided on the same problem. Hands shot up everywhere. Everyone was consumed with mirth at this point and the chairman had some trouble bringing his meeting back to order.

Ever since that day this has seemed to me a subject that should be frankly explored for the good of all our denominations, and for the encouragement of more candidates in the field of Christian Education. Why should it be difficult for a pastor and a director to serve together, both sincerely dedicating their lives to Christ and His Kingdom?

The question of status is a serious one and no doubt relates to some extent to the increasing number of men entering this field. In view of the fact, however, it is more likely to occur with women directors, we shall use the pronoun "she" as we pursue this discussion. Let us assume that the church we are describing is fair to every member of its staff. Discounting the obvious possibilities of differing temperaments and personalities, there are other snags and snares that bear watching by even the most congenial colleagues.

The typical pastor's statistics may be something like this: He is serving a church with a budget sufficient to afford a director and his own job is overwhelmingly large. No one man could adequately meet the demands of public preaching and speaking with its many hours of preparation, the organizational and executive work, the pastoral services to individuals and families, *and* an effective educational program. The Church school program comes on Sunday mornings and makes it impossible for him to take a regular and

(*Continued on next page*)

EDITOR'S NOTES

Margaret M. Morton is Director of Religious Education at the Wellesley (Mass.) Congregational Church; *Alfred W. Swan* is minister of the First Congregational Church in Madison, Wisconsin; *Howard Stearns* is minister of our church in Putnam, Connecticut.

active part. Even if he had time for the educational job, he may not be prepared for it by training or experience. But he gives it a high priority in importance and intends to back it in every possible way with full enthusiasm. He wants a school and youth program to be proud of and will do what he can to make for good working conditions for his colleague, expecting her to have freedom in leadership. He knows that a good working relationship will be essential and is ready to adjust to that. As soon as he has given her a good start, he will expect her to carry her own load independently and he will try not to get in her way.

As for the director, she is ready to accept the leadership of the pastor. She respects him or she would not have accepted the call. She knows that his seminary training was longer than hers, that his knowledge and experience in pastoral work is probably greater, that he is a better Bible scholar and theologian.

It is important that her purposes and religious beliefs as an assistant be similar to those of the minister with whom she is to be associated, so a chance to become well acquainted before accepting the call is important. She should ascertain too whether, not only the pastor, but the parish really wants a strong educational program, for the whole parish will be involved. Large numbers of volunteers will be needed, the parish calendar, the church budget and the use of the building will be basic to success.

The chances are that the director faces a job that commands little respect on the part of either church or community, for the reputation of church schools across the country is pretty low. She knows and they know that the "good old Sunday School" broke about as many young Christians as it built. So her job is an experimental one and is almost certain to involve reorganization and change. The parish that is "set" in age-old traditions is not the one for a live director. Long-range planning is her language. Results in spiritual growth and character development her purpose. She is interested in individual children and families, in developing a program that will attract them, command their respect and meet their religious needs. She wants to be used by God to further His Kingdom, to bring people to faith in Christ and to membership in His church.

The Church School is not one of many parish organizations. It is part of the ministry of the church. It is the only religious program offered those not ready for the adult service of worship, too young to gain full value from it. It is not too much to expect a church to provide as high a standard of leadership for its children as for its adults and as high a standard of building facilities and equipment. Surely all people are equal in the sight of God, rich and poor, old and young.

Nowadays the necessity for parent cooperation has been made familiar by the public schools, the Cub Scouts, the dancing classes and every other competent organization for the young, so it surely should not be questioned in the churches. There it is particularly important, for Christian education is a high but intangible aim and necessitates home understanding and, indeed, home teaching. The church that demands most of the volunteer time of parents in other departments of its work is defeating the success of this parent department.

And so the director may feel that her first responsibility is to parents, knowing well that it is they, not she, who will influence the child seven days a week. She will hope to establish an active parent program, planned and conducted by parents themselves. But more time-consuming than this will be another adult program, that for teachers.

In a church that is highly organized, care will be needed to make possible time and space for these two basic adult groups to function. There must be week-day meetings. Special prestige needs to be

connected with teaching jobs, for church school teaching is probably the most exacting kind of volunteer service that a church asks and it is easy for willing workers to choose something that requires no study and that comes on week-days only. If other groups perhaps have more social attraction and seem to be equally important in the eyes of the pastor, it may be difficult to enlist competent teachers, or to keep them for a sufficient tenure. And the more active and "successful" a church is, the more likely this is to happen.

* * * *

There are then some points of possible conflict in any church. There is the possibility, though not a likelihood, in the case of a church with two strong leaders, of a divided parish. A disloyal director can undermine a minister's influence as she calls about the parish and comes into intimate contact with the people. A minister can make or break a director, and the breaking can be done without the slightest intention, simply through lack of understanding of the educational job.

SOME TYPES OF PARISH problem, deeply disheartening to any conscientious director, may be exemplified by the following actual situations:

A. A primary department room that was built and decorated and used for children's worship is taken over by the church for a coffee hour, and a make-shift arrangement set up for the children.

B. The church supports a scout troop, providing it with a meeting place and leaders. The overhead scout organization schedules a series of week-end camping trips that conflict with the Sunday Church School program, thereby breaking into the regular attendance and interest of a number of scouts, and making for split loyalties and confusion in the minds of its youth. The decision of lay leaders is to give priority to the scout program.

C. The room assigned kindergarten children, whose class is held during the church service, becomes seriously overcrowded, resulting in an impossible teaching situation and damage rather than help to the children. Because limiting the number of children would in some degree deplete the size of the adult congregation, the governing body of the church requests the Church School leaders to accept *any* number of children, regardless of overcrowding.

Every parish church faces such tangles and the pastor and director need to expect them and be ready for them. They must see eye to eye and do what they can together to interest the people in a fine school—all the people, whether or not they happen to be parents. Probably many such situations could be avoided if a definite policy is decided upon in advance giving priority to the church school by the parish and its lay leaders. A good school is difficult enough to attain, given even the very best circumstances.

Maybe a Church School is not in order for every church. Maybe the parish isn't convinced that it should have priority over all but the morning service of worship, or that it can possibly achieve a really high standard and expect as good teaching as is given in day school. Maybe, then, a Junior Church is the answer, with nothing but professional leadership. Maybe an educational program for parents would be more suitable, guiding them in home teaching with no church classes for their children. But, if a church school *is* to be attempted, this may be expected to take years of time and a great deal of collective, creative thinking and strong teamwork.

THERE IS A DIFFERENCE between the terms "pastor" and "director." The jobs are different too. The pastor also has a heavy executive load, but once a week, at least, he speaks directly to his people. The director teaches *through* other people, volunteers, and a school is, in comparison with an adult Sunday congregation, a highly complex affair. While on one side of a wall a congregation unites in wor-

ship, on the other dozens of teachers and assistants are functioning at the same time, sometimes needing the same space or equipment, sometimes unintentionally disturbing one another's classes. There are emergencies to meet—a child whose breakfast has noticeably disagreed with him, another suddenly overcome with homesickness, and a third who has brought a squirrel along in his pocket; the teacher whose car broke down on the way to church school, the projector that takes a day off while a hundred children fidget, the outraged parent whose five-year-old was inadvertantly placed in nursery instead of kindergarten. There are discipline questions to solve, intricate records to be kept. The director, who might almost be called the engineer, has to make quick decisions and often act fast. Above all, she must protect teachers and encourage each one or she will, quite rightly, lose them. *They* are the important ones, not she, for it is they who have closest contact with the children.

IT WOULD BE FUTILE to write such an article as this, pointing up pitfalls if there were no solution. But there are indeed solutions.

Could not our denominations provide opportunities for joint conferences of ministers and directors to study together, making possible the education of the director in the larger service of the total church, and the minister in the more technical work of the director? Could not education, or "the evangelization of the younger generation," have a place in the program of every great assembly of ministers, along with such concerns as Missions and Social Action?

Could not better training be given in our seminaries on the place of the pastor in Christian Education?

When a minister and director have started to serve the same people regular consultation should be the habit. If this lapses for the sake of economy of time, matters can transpire making for tension. Not only do the two need to consult, they need to participate somewhat in one another's work. A director should arrange her work in such a way that she is free sometimes to attend the church service. How can she accept her pastor as spiritual leader if she never hears him preach? And even at the expense of time greatly needed by her own program, it is well for her to identify herself with some of the parish organizations. She should come to know the people, and she should surely be on easy terms with the lay leaders and church officers. Her department of work should never become separate, but rather a strong part of the organic whole, constantly bringing members into the church.

It is quite possible that a pastor can lean over backwards "keeping out of the director's way"! How can he know the problems of his church school if he never, from one year's end to the next, sees it in action? Some ministers do take a Sunday off from preaching upon occasion in order to identify themselves in the flesh with their schools. Proof positive this is of interest and concern, proof too that teachers are not isolated from their pastor, but are appreciated by him as fellow workers in one ministry.

GOOD RELATIONSHIPS within our churches, especially among members of our staffs, are not only pleasant and advisable but absolutely essential. Mutual recognition, rapport, comraderie, the habit of speaking directly about anything at all with the expectation of being understood —surely we must expect this much of ourselves if we are to give our best. Whatever the relationship between the pastor and his assistants, it will be sensed by the whole parish. It creates the climate of the parish church. Colleagues can count on themselves to achieve this, they can count on God's guidance to help them to do so. With the sharing of faith in Christ and prayer for the church they serve together, will come harmony and united purpose and humble service.

A translation of
Sirach XXXIX, 1-10
by **Ellis E. Pierce**
Rensselaer Falls, N. Y.

THE IDEAL PROFESSION

The man who applies his mind
And studies the law of the Most High
Will seek out the wisdom of the ancients,
And concern himself with prophecies.
He regards the discourses of the famous,
As well as the figures of parables.
He discerns the meaning of proverbs,
And understands obscure allegations.
He will serve among great men,
He shall stand before the governors.
Among men with whom he travels
He will test both good and evil.

He will give his heart to the Lord,
Appearing early before his Maker.
He will offer his prayer to the Most High
To make supplication for his sins.
He shall be filled with the spirit of knowledge,
His voice shall utter wise sayings.
He shall lead his people in their prayers,
And guide them with counsel and knowledge.
He shall meditate on the secrets of God,
And through teaching reveal what he learned.

Many will laud his knowledge,
The congregation will utter his praise;
But his glory will be in the Law,
And the covenant of the Lord his God.

—Jesus ben Sira

A Communion Address

THE SACRIFICE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

by ALFRED W. SWAN

He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. — Isaiah 53:5.

THE GENERAL THEORY of the Old Testament appears to be that the wicked suffer for their sins, and the righteous are blessed for their virtues. This prudential theory of ethics is instanced in the conclusion of the first Psalm: For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish.

There is sufficient ground of truth in this to carry over into the New Testament. By their fruits ye shall know them. Be sure your sin will find you out. The house of the wise and good, built upon the rock, shall stand; the structure of the foolish and wicked, built upon the sand, shall perish in the storm. The popular concept of this principle is that crime never pays; and virtue and industry are rewarded by recognition and success. These are, in the main, sound principles to live by; but they are not the whole story of human experience.

For the Old Testament had begun to grasp another higher and more subtle principle that it is not always or only the wicked, but the righteous who suffer. The prosperity of the wicked had confused the Hebrew mind, as it has all our minds. The answer to that matter the Psalmist found when he went into the house of God and considered the latter end of the wicked, whose prosperity would be temporary in the divine economy, and whose final fall was certain. With the suffering of the righteous the ancient mind wrestled even more manfully in the poetic drama of Job, whose thesis is: Though he slay me, yet will I trust him. A famous psychiatrist, son of a Protestant minister, (Jung) points out that this makes Job better than Jehovah, and Man better than God, or at least than the concept of God that then prevailed. That is, says he, here is an anticipatory form of the incarnation, God revealed in Man himself. That was the problem of the theodicy—the justice of God, which the drama resolves in favor of the man who trusts God sight unseen.

But the Hebrews, out of their own suffering as a nation, moved on to a still higher concept of the purpose of suffering, or at least the effect of some sacrifice. In this Suffering Servant passage in Isaiah, the prophetic insight saw that it is the righteous who may suffer the most. And they suffer for a purpose, that the world may be redeemed from sin and evil.

There is apparently some evidence that this idea carried on into the inter-testamental Essene community at Qumran, on the western shores of the Dead Sea, whose long preserved library of scrolls is revealing its life and discipline. Their leader was a Teacher of Righteousness who suffered. If so, this is but a bridge in the continuity between the Old and the New Testament.

For the New Testament illustrates preeminently in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, that the most righteous suffer most. The creation of righteousness is finally achieved only through sacrifice. This sacrifice is often paid by some for the benefit of others. This is sociological-

ly and historically true; it is religiously and spiritually certain.

The early Christian community therefore reached back to such passages as the 53rd chapter of Isaiah for prophetic and anticipatory instances of this profound principle. The righteous suffer that righteousness may be.

II

Why is this so? Because the world is imperfect and evil, and to propose righteousness incurs opposition. Even to propose a new idea, that most ephemeral of all things, may arouse violent antagonisms.

This is illustrated in many ways. It is true in the most elemental struggle we have with nature, as, for instance, when pioneers go into the forest primeval and wrest a living for their children from the great wilderness. Every muscle they strain, all the energy they sweat, every peril of the savage they endure, is being bruised for the economic salvation of their children, who in turn begin the same routine for the next generation. All we who enjoy the benefits of a civilization of comfort and security do so by the stripes of those who have gone before us. There is not time or place here to develop the matter; but this is the basic spiritual principle back of all economic and social living. Someone else interposes himself between us and poverty and prison. Anyone sensitive to these matters, will see that we are thus under an unpayable debt to those who have borne or do bear the chastisement of our peace and plenty. This suffering is the only deliverance from the primal curse.

In the higher and more intricate levels of experience it is only more true that it is the righteous who bear the brunt of the world's sin, and receive into their own bodies the wounds, and into their own souls the hurt, by which the power of evil is finally broken, and the new forces of life and righteousness are released.

This was true for Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley, burned at the stake at Oxford University, October 16, 1555, under Bloody Mary, for their Protestant faith, Latimer crying, "Play the man, Master Ridley; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out."

It is equally true of Fundamentalist missionaries perishing by the lances of Auca Indians in Ecuador, that the Gospel may be conveyed to every creature. It is an old story, yet ever new, that the righteous suffer that civilization may replace savagery, and spirituality invest civilization.

It is imperfectly true of the soldier who dies for what his side deems a more ideal world, remembering that the other side may aspire to what is there deemed more ideal also. It is subtly true in the pacifist who endures obloquy and in some societies death for the ideal kingdom which he glimpses by faith.

And not only in these melodramatic instances, but in many daily, even humdrum ways, in which men and women suffer that others may enjoy fulfillment of their wishes, and both material and spiritual goods. This is an awe-ful fact, of the kind that "causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble, when I think how they crucified my Lord." The Christian finds supreme illustration of the Sacrifice of Righteousness in Christ, the type of the world's Savior, who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. All praise and honor to His Holy Name!

III

But now there is a very real danger in assimilating this principle that it is the righteous who suffer. We appropriate it to ourselves too readily. If we suffer in any respect, we put on a martyr pose, and mar our personalities with self-righteousness.

Suffering may originate from at least three different sources. It may arise in

acts of nature, the catastrophes of our environment, or the diseases of our bodies, which, like lightning striking a man's barn, are not matters of morality. Even such suffering may be used to demonstrate the power of the spirit to endure. Only in such a distant sense can they be related to the riddance of the world of evil and the triumph of righteousness.

Much more seriously, suffering may come to us because of our own sins and misdemeanors, of obvious and blatant type or of hidden and therefore more insidious form. Then it ill becomes us to complain of the pain we bear, and behooves us rather to sense the disciplinary nature of punishment for our own affronteries to God, and amend us of our wounds to other men. We need to take care lest we too readily identify our self-induced misfortunes with the suffering of the servants of mankind, who selfless bear in them the burdens and the beatings of the powers of evil in places high and low. There are plenty of times when we must acknowledge our pains as punishment for our sins.

But there is a third source of suffering, which is in line with this principle that the righteous themselves suffer, precisely because they are righteous. We do well to impute this to others rather than to appropriate it for ourselves. Yet there are times when it comes home to us. At such a time we may claim the promises:

Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad; for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. (Matt. 5:10-12.)

We are to count it an honor, and to bear it with as little bitterness as possible. And we do well to search our hearts to see whether it really applies at all, knowing how easily we deceive ourselves. The test is whether our objectives are selfless, and whether we are generous and right. Beware the martyr complex; few things are so disfiguring. Remember Jesus Christ.

IV

For in Christ's case we can be sure he suffered because he was good. He was ahead of his times and of our types. Because he was better than men, they deemed him different, and therefore an object of suspicion and hate. Yet we say he bore the sin of the world, that he might redeem it unto righteousness.

There is this to be added: We have here an eternal principle. What Jesus did, the Christ is doing. The process of redemption is going on. The sin of the world is being taken away by the continuing sacrifice of an eternal Christ, ever projecting itself from the heart of God and finding wondrous residence in the heart of Man. Such is the "plan of salvation." And here we see forever the ancient insight: the chastisement of our peace is upon them, and by their stripes are we healed.

This word of Hebrew thought in the Old Testament is carried over into a New Testament appeal in terms of Christian insight to the Hebrews: "Having then a great high priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need." (Heb. 4:14-16.)

THAT WE MAY BE MUTUALLY ENCOURAGED

by HOWARD STEARNS

MANY A PASTOR on many a Sunday morning has sought to tell his flock that the church is a wonderful fellowship of brothers in Christ united by a bond deeper and stronger than any other bond in heaven or earth. Probably he has never finished such a sermon without a shudder of longing and an awareness of his own terrible loneliness because that about which he had spoken so rapturously was so far from the actuality of his own life. Even for pastors who have led their people into a more acute awareness of the *koinonia* through many means, there is still a void as he thinks of his loneliness among men.

Thus it has become increasingly apparent that in our ministry we pastors lose the reality of the Church because we rarely know it in our own experience. This is most disastrous for our faith because for Christians the Church is at the heart of our faith. Without a living awareness of what this fellowship is in all the power of its shared relationship with God, in all the depth of the sharing of common problems and experiences one with another we pastors just plain lose the power of God in our lives.

It seems apparent therefore that some solution to this problem must not only be arrived at but must be practiced assiduously. I have prepared this article to offer the solution that is now working in Connecticut.

For the past two years a small group of clergy from varying denominational and theological backgrounds has gathered at Senexet House, a retreat center in the northeastern corner of Connecticut, for three days of prayer and Bible study and mutual sharing. If a theme could be culled from scripture it would be this from the first chapter of Romans, "That we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine."

These retreats have been planned to give a maximum opportunity for quiet meditation and prayer that the things of the world may be pushed aside and God may be known more fully in the lives of the retreatants. But equally important, much time has been spent in sharing together words of scripture and above all common problems and experiences. The attempt has been made to make the Great Commandment more vital in our lives.

The testimony of the retreatants has been amazing. On one retreat two men expressed their utter frustration in the ministry and their desire to leave the calling. The whole retreat became a fellowship of intercession on their behalf and today both of these men are still serving their churches with far greater awareness of God's calling than before. On another occasion, a man came with a personal problem about which he sought help. He did not reveal his problem but because we knew he was perturbed we prayed for him. He left confessing that his problem had been solved and that it was the tremendous sense of close fellowship which had brought the matter to a solution. This year a young minister serving in a lonely situation where worldly church success in terms of bigness is the rule but where he is so aware that the Spirit of God is absent, found solace from his loneliness in sharing in the retreat. Another minister, beseiged by deep problems confessed that he had perhaps found too much help from psychiatrists and was brought back to a realization that the gospel of Christ is the power of salvation. He found this because the group

was a real fellowship in Christ. These testimonies could go on and on but these few bear witness, most assuredly, that these experiences are what ministers need if they are to remain steadfast to their high calling.

Therefore, because these retreats have meant so much to the men who made them, and because often they have been the one bright spot of fellowship in a year of grim struggling and loneliness I suggest them as a real possibility to be carried out within state conferences throughout our fellowship. Incidentally, although this retreat was interdenominational, there is no reason why it need to be. The interdenominational flavor helps however in one regard, parochial denominational problems which can so easily occupy one's time are made of little consequence.

Thus, what must be done to have a retreat of ministers? Let me offer here some suggestions which may be of help in preparing such a retreat at which men could come together to know for a few brief hours the reality of the Church of Christ.

THE FIRST PROBLEM involved is to select a place at which to hold the retreat. It should be a place well away from the locality in which the men minister. It should be quiet, provide facilities for discussion groups and for worship. Rooms should be single, if possible. The mechanical work such as food preparation should be taken care of, or kept to a minimum as far as the retreatants are concerned.

The groups should be small. There should be no more than twenty on the retreat. When the group becomes too large, there is a tendency for some not to participate. Every effort must be made that the retreat is a retreat and not a conference. There is a world of difference between the two.

There is a distinct value in not having any leadership other than someone who prepares a schedule of activities and acts as timekeeper. Too often we go to conferences or ministers "retreats" where we are lambasted with speeches, aims and goals of the denomination and there is little if any chance to either meet God or one another.

The schedule for the retreat should be precise and agreed to prior to the beginning of the retreat. One of the most important parts of retreat experience is the giving of oneself into a completely prearranged program. This program should not be so filled, however, that there is not time for solitary meditation and prayer and two by two discussion beyond that of the regular program of the retreat.

Following is the schedule which was used most successfully for the past two years:

FIRST DAY

4:00 Arrive
4:30 Orientation
5:30 Vespers
6:00 Supper
7:30 Spiritual Introductions
9:45 Compline
(Overnight silence begins)

SECOND DAY

7:00 Rising Hour (in silence)
7:30 Morning Worship
8:00 Breakfast
9:00 Bible Study
10:00 Hour of Meditation (Silence)
11:00 Free time (for further meditation if desired)
12:00 Lunch
1:30 Bible Study
2:30 Hour of Meditation (silence)
3:30 Free Time (for further meditation if desired)
4:30 Discussion
5.30 Vespers
6:00 Supper
7:30 Hymn Sing
8:30 Discussion
9:45 Compline
(Overnight silence begins)

THIRD DAY

7:00	Rising Hour (in silence)
7:30	Morning Worship
8:00	Breakfast
9:00	Bible Study
10:00	Hour of Meditation (in silence)
11:00	Free Time (for further meditation if desired)
12:00	Lunch
1:00	Closing Worship—Sacrament of Holy Communion
1:30	Leave

There are some items in the schedule of the retreat which may bear some comment. On the first day the part of the program that occupies the most time and is perhaps the most important part of the whole retreat is that part which has been called "Spiritual Introductions." Sitting in a circle before the fireplace the group introduces itself. This is not just the usual recital of name and address and church but a searching revelation of ones background, call to the ministry and problems one is facing in serving the Church. This obviously takes a long time, and it has been after 11:00 before it was over. But, the sense of unburdening, of release as we shared with our brethren our loneliness, our jealousies, our frustrations, our lack of devotion, our church problems, and our estrangement from God whom we are called to serve was such as can not in any way be described.

The Bible Study has always been a most fruitful experience. The scriptures to be studied were chosen by the group at the orientation session. The various backgrounds meant varying interpretations and led to heated argument. However, where in so many experiences argument brings estrangement at the retreat, because of the common bond of the spiritual introductions and the awareness of God's presence, it brought only a more glorious experience of the Holy Spirit. Thus, when the time for the hour of silent meditation came the group was infinitely aware of God and ready for centering down upon God.

Many methods and guides for meditation were used by the retreatants. Some read more than they meditated, others, developing in the contemplative life made several distinct meditations. Some used examinations of conscience which searched out before God even more piercingly the hidden sins common to the clergy. Others used a series of retreat meditations designed especially for pastors. Some meditated on scripture in their rooms, others walked paths outdoors sublimely aware of God walking with them, others went into the chapel, others sat in the room used for discussion. Some thought, some prayed, some, as a result of their meditation, write. But, in all this period God was the sole object of the heart and mind. This meditation in most every case extended through the second hour.

THE DISCUSSION SCHEDULED for the afternoon was planned to be an opportunity not so much to argue a theme but to share any experience individuals had had concerning the life of prayer. The problem faced most squarely and rewardingly this year was prayer life in the parsonage and how the minister and his wife could share a depth of Christian experience together more fully than before.

At the close we participated in the Sacrament of Holy Communion sensing together the presence of Our Lord going with us to our separate charges.

There was, and probably should not be any attempt to cement this fellowship together after the retreat. Practical problems militate against this. But, the experience of the retreat remains steadfast in one's mind and keeps one throughout the year constant in the knowledge that others are laboring for our Lord with the same problems. Above all because God has been known so fully in this experience everyone realizes that he can be known everyday in the same depths if we keep our hearts and minds open to His Grace.

THE MINISTER AND THEOLOGY

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NOT BECAUSE YOU MAY, BUT BECAUSE YOU MUST

by CHALMERS COE

"I THINK IT IS SAFE TO SAY," remarked a clergyman in another Protestant Church, "that a person's Christian growth can be measured by how frequently he takes communion." With that statement as it stands I suppose most Congregationalists must disagree. The custom prevailing among us of having the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper either once a month or once every two months makes sheer frequency of communion a secondary consideration in the matter of our growth in grace. Besides, even if we were to have communion far more often than we do, it would still be highly dangerous to measure Christian holiness statistically. Nevertheless the clergyman's remark contained some truth. If the Eucharist is—as the Christian tradition has always affirmed—the central act of worship, a person's regular participation in it is a fair indication of the seriousness of his purpose as a member of the Body of Christ. And, conversely, that Congregationalist is certainly an immature Christian who is indifferent to this Sacrament to the point of failing to receive it as regularly as the Church provides it.

All of which is by way of commentary on some familiar words which are to be found in one invitation to the communion: "Come, not because you must but because you may." There is a sense in which those words are badly misleading. If they are taken to mean simply that no one is driven to the Lord's Table against his will, well and good. But if they are taken to mean that the Eucharist is an "option" for the baptized and professed Christian; if they are taken to mean that the Lord's Supper is little more than an interminable performance which is tacked on to a preaching service, keeps everybody from getting home to an early dinner and so is to be avoided, particularly when week-end guests are present; if they are taken to mean that receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ is permissible to the Christian rather than obligatory, then these words are terribly wrong. It is at once a privilege and a duty for the Christian person to be present at the celebration of the sacrament. In fact, he will feel inwardly compelled to go, will be driven by the necessity of personal encounter with His crucified, risen, and exalted Lord. He will come not because he may, but because he must.

If that is true, what more is to be said about the Lord's Supper and its meaning?

EDITOR'S NOTES

We are happy to present the first of two articles on the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper by Chalmers Coe, Minister of the Mount Vernon Church in Boston, Massachusetts. The second article will appear in the next issue.

Letters of critical comment, approximately five hundred words in length, on the main articles in this section are invited for publication. They should be sent to the Department Editor no later than one month after the article appears.

The letters in this issue are from Henry David Gray who is Minister of South Congregational Church in Hartford, Connecticut, commenting on the Entsler article and the Greene letter and from Ernest A. Rueter, Minister of the First Congregational-Christian Church in Nashua, Iowa and the First Congregational Church in Ionia, Iowa, who is commenting on the Dick article. A Kenseth poem is becoming a welcome and regular feature.

For we had better face it: Christians both lay and clerical are probably not nearly so familiar with the significance of the service as they used to be.

I

The first meaning of the Lord's Supper is this: **Jesus Christ makes Himself present to the worshipping Church.** Some Christians go into rather considerable detail about the precise way in which He can be present in the congregation: Roman Catholics believe, for instance, that the "substance," or basic stuff, of the bread and wine is changed into the substance of Christ's Body and Blood while the "accidents," or outward appearances, remain the same. Christians at the other extreme reject the concept of Christ's presence in the elements, holding them to be mere tokens or reminders of Him; a few even deny the validity of the sacrament in any sense whatever. Congregationalists, however, along with other Christians in the Reformed tradition—the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in particular—are reluctant either to spell out in too much detail the manner of Christ's presence or to minimize it. They steer a kind of middle course.

To the Catholic they say: We recognize your laudable desire to preserve the belief that, when the bread and wine are broken and poured out, Jesus is here. But we feel—and we say it respectfully—that when you begin to use words like "substance" and "accidents" you are leaving the world of the New Testament and entering the world of Aristotle and the Greek philosophers. In some respects that procedure is unavoidable; we have done so too, particularly when we have said with the rest of the Christian world that "Jesus Christ is of the same substance as the Father." But that was another matter; it involved the very survival of the Christian Gospel at a time when it might have disappeared in a cloud of speculative mysticism. What is more, the language you use contributes to the unfortunate idea that it's perfectly permissible to kneel before the consecrated bread and wine after the service is done (after all, a "substance" isn't changed back again into bread and wine at the minister's dictation). To us, that seems perilously like idolatry. So, while we admire your effort and applaud your motive, we can't go along with you in crossing every "t" and dotting every "i".

Then to the Quaker they say: We like your notion that all of human life can be a means by which God comes to men. And we don't mean to be crude enough to begin comparing the degree of Jesus' presence in the Supper with the degree of His presence somewhere else. Notice three things, though. First, Jesus commanded us to continue the communion, whatever its meaning is. Second, see how forgetful people are of Jesus Christ's presence everywhere when they no longer bother to admit His presence at His table; the world is full of people who have no grasp of nature's meaning in Christian terms: to them it's "Jupiter Pluvius" in the case of rain and scientific contraception in the case of sex and thermonuclear weapons in the case of atoms. Is it any wonder they feel as they do, when there is not any God whom they meet by mouth in Church? Third, we feel you have too little appreciation of the "enfleshment" of God in Jesus Himself. We use the word advisedly, and perhaps a trifle offensively. And for this reason: anybody who understands the "enfleshment" of God the Son to have been a fact will also be predisposed to understand Christ's presence in the Supper as a fact. That, at all events, is how we feel.

Such are the points which intelligent Congregationalists might make to their fellow-Christians on the right and on the left. Jesus Christ, they would conclude, is truly present in the Eucharist. Of course, He is present elsewhere; but this is His own appointed means of coming to the community of His people, and helps them to recognize Him when He comes in other ways. On a dark night, when

everything around you is hidden in an almost impenetrable mantle of blackness, you can just make out the figure of a man standing a few steps ahead in the path; for all the handicaps of sight, you recognize who is standing there from a characteristic gesture of his arm or stoop of his carriage. And the reason why recognition is even possible is that you have met Him face to face many times, and heard Him announce His name and come to know Him in a living encounter. That is the way in which Jesus' presence at other places and on other occasions is related to His presence in the Lord's Supper.

Furthermore, and this is more important, perhaps, than any other consideration, Christians of the Reformed inheritance are highly suspicious of any description of the sacraments which fails to take account of the *action* in the service. The God of the Bible is, after all, the God who acts, who has laid hands upon the world and dealt with it decisively in Christ. Without necessarily reading the Christian philosopher out of the party we cannot very easily allow him to let his fondness for speculation and rational analysis blind the rest of us to the terms of our common charter: that God is more a Creator than an Absolute, more a Redeemer than a Supreme Being, more a Sanctifier than an Essence. And therefore in the sacrament it is the breaking of the bread, and not alone the bread itself, we are concerned with. So St. Luke implies, at any rate. And the pouring of the wine matters far more than the investigation of its atomic structure. It is in these terms that we come to the real meaning of the Lord's Supper: Jesus comes; Jesus enters; Jesus gives Himself; and therefore Jesus is here.

II

The second meaning of the Holy Communion has recently been much less to the fore even than the first. It is this: **Jesus Christ is pledging His presence with us in the future.** Not just tomorrow or next year, or even until the hour of our death: that much is included in what we have just considered. He will be present, rather, in the future Kingdom of God, which is to say the Kingdom beyond human history. Our Lord prophesied shortly before His Passion: "I will no more eat of the fruit of the vine until I eat it anew in the Kingdom of God." And the author of the Apocalypse wrote about the heavenly marriage feast which the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, will have with His Bride, the Church.

Usually modern Christians have thought of Heaven as a place where people will "grow" or "work" just as they have in the world. That is understandable. Modern life is probably more active and busy and restless than life in any previous age, and men tend always to draw the details of eternity from the only model they now have: the world around them. And yet the author of the epistle to the Hebrews gives an entirely different picture. He has in mind a Sabbath-rest in which Christians no longer engage in a whirlwind round of toil and social engagement, but presumably throw their appointment books away. And surely it is just as appropriate to think of Heaven as a kind of life in which the joy we associate with a feast is never absent and communion with the Lord of the feast—our Saviour—is the continuing and sustaining fact.

Moreover, we would do well to remember another condition of a feast: not only does it involve communion with the Lord who gives it, but it has a corporate character. In all the latter-day talk about what is referred to as an "after-life" one thing is distressingly obvious: it usually implies *my* eternal life, *my* destiny, *my* goal. But that is precisely what the New Testament understanding of Heaven completely omits. *Our* destiny, *our* eternal life, *our* goal: these are the crucial matters. In fact, the writers of the gospels and epistles seem to assume that no Christian is complete without all of his companions in faith; until the General Resurrection and

the Last Judgment he sleeps in Jesus, waiting for the end of time when he and his fellow-Christians together will receive the crown of life. Heaven is corporate. That is part of what the New Testament means by describing eternal life in the terms of a banquet, not a lonely meal snatched hastily at a lunch counter.

Now the importance of the Lord's Supper for our understanding of everlasting life follows. As we receive the bread and wine, together with the Body and Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, we have a kind of foretaste of what our life will be once we have finished our course in the world of space and time. The Lord's Supper is a kind of "Heaven by anticipation," or, taking into account its way of conveying the divine pardon for our sins, it is a "medicine of immortality." The Christian lifts his cupped hands to his mouth; he lifts the wine to his lips, and, as he eats and drinks, he has—here and now—a pledge of Heaven. Before his inner vision passes the sight of that feast which he and every other member of the church of Jesus Christ will enjoy when there is no longer any grain for bread or liquid wine to nourish him. And, if his devotion is anything like the kind of devotion his first-century predecessors had, he is overwhelmed by the majesty and splendor, the judgment and the mercy, of the God who can meet him both at the world's end and today.

III

The third meaning of the Holy Communion is probably more popular and more misunderstood than any other in our time. **It helps us to remember the Jesus who, one night in the past, prepared to die for men.**

The meaning is widely acknowledged. After all, even people who cannot bring themselves to believe anything as supernatural as that Jesus is really here in bread and wine can still, without undue strain, meditate upon the facts of Jesus' life and death. We have come to a period in historical research when virtually no one, whether he is friend or foe of Christianity, seriously contends that our Lord never lived or taught or suffered or was crucified. A century ago, and even less, there were some who did offer that contention; but biblical scholarship has thoroughly outgrown the claim. And therefore almost anyone, Christian believer or sincere and thoughtful pagan who "respects Jesus as a man," could take some crumbs or wafers and some fermented or unfermented wine and be "reminded" of the Jesus of history who broke a loaf and gave a cup to His disciples. A large percentage of modern Protestants, when it comes to that, would probably hold that this aspect of the Holy Communion is the only one of any real importance.

But that is to distort the truth. For, although our Lord did say "Do this in remembrance of me," He and those who reclined at the table with Him had another understanding of His meaning. In those days a "memorial" was more than what we take it to be now: it was a method by which the event being commemorated was made to live again. And the signs are not lacking that modern man is beginning to grasp something of that interpretation. Proust's novels, with their talk about a recaptured past, are coming to have a certain relevance for him. He finds intelligible and useful Mr. C. S. Lewis' references to the "joy" a child finds once in a while and which, even when he grows to maturity, he continually and vainly longs to find again. Above all, Freud is having his effect on the contemporary situation; a memory, he says, may lie buried, but is startlingly active nevertheless, and must be consciously lifted from its premature grave if a man is to cope with it adequately and so become a complete person. The past, then, is not static but dynamic. The act of remembering is a kind of inner repetition. And our Lord's Last Supper, together with the events in which it issued, acts itself out in the worship of the Church. "Once for all?" Yes, historically; no, psychologically.

Eucharist

NOW TO THIS TABLE WILL LIMP HOME
Unwinged, great Man, that famished bird,
From brief calamitous flight,
To taste again the marrowed Word.

O brilliant, brittle airman, he:
Riding his wonderful bones on cloud,
Warming his summer-time of flesh,
His atoms soaring and unbowed.

How bright he treads against the sun,
Icarian-sure his known, his real:
He plunges, chromosomes' Elect,
To landscapes sprouting death and steel.

So by this Board of all his doubt
He will sink down at last: wing-sweep,
Mechanic bluff, sky-swagger gone:
Un-eagled in a frightened heap.

Thus sparrowed down to zero, earth,
A smashed, sick bundle of defeat:
His beggared beak will rise, and from
Those crippled Hands take fire and eat.

—ARNOLD KENSETH

Comment on "Congregationalism"

THE RECENT QUARTERLY ARTICLES on the Doctrine of the Church are an excellent point of beginning for discussion of this facet of our theology.

It is, however, a *theology based on Christian experience* which is basic, *not* sociology. The arguments for centralization, administrative authority, decreased "distance" due to better communication, and the like have been used to store up sociological or political concepts of the church since the early days of the church. Constantine used them and so did Hilderbrand, and so have others through the centuries.

If, "our church life has become so fluid that it is in great danger of being soaked up by the diverse secular sponges of our culture," as Mr. Greene suggests, then surely the cure is not for the church itself to adopt the patterns of the "secular sponges." The same danger was present after the conquest of Canaan!

Mr. Greene is on much sounder ground when he points to "our particular understanding of the Lordship of Christ," for the churches continued vitality and influence. Supposing that the church *could* gain influence and power by secular means, that would *not* make it a better Church of Christ; it would be more likely to make it a poorer Church of Christ.

Sociology is the study of our society in all its ramifications. It is by no means a "norm" for any Christian doctrine. Were that to be true, we should (1) be forced to the conclusion that Christian doctrine was different in each contemporary society and in each historical culture, (2) be compelled to accept as normative a society which is largely sub-Christian, and (3) be pushed into a position which denied the validity of much of the New Testament, simply because these writings emerged in particular sociological situations.

Christian theology is the study of Christian belief in all its varied facets. The formulations of doctrine or of dogma have often (too often) borne the imprint of a particular era or even of a particular nation. Whenever such emphases have been made there has been a later correction of the imbalance and that correction has occurred as Christians turned again to the source of their faith, that is, to God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ. Furthermore, when the Church has made the revelation of God in Christ its norm, and has might to live "in Him," amazing spiritual strength has come into its whole life. The church then begins to fulfill its function, which is *not to conform* to sociological trends, *but to redeem* and re-work those trends until the society we live in begins to reflect the faith we live by.

God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and when He is at the center of Christ's Church that Church becomes His agent of Reconciliation which helps to lift both personal and societal life to a more Christ-like level. Our witness and our work are one and the same; for we work in order to witness to God's grace and our witness would be shallow pretense without work. But the initiative is with God, we study human nature and human society and seek to transform both because we love Him who first loved us. The Church's *one foundation* is Jesus Christ, whose Lordship in the Church is the sole authority which is denied when we substitute in His place any other authority. The Church does not exist to accept society; it exists to transform society.

—HENRY DAVID GRAY

Comment on "Baptism"

In the recent Quarterly article on Baptism it is admitted that too often the rite of baptism is just stuck into the order of worship. If it is possible to set forth the theological basis of the church in our day, it also ought to be possible to set forth the theological basis of various functions within the church, one of them being baptism.

To begin with, baptism is a function within the church that serves the purpose of introducing a person into the Christian fellowship. Baptism serves as the initiation rite. This is the key definition.

In the Letter to the Church at Colassae the Apostle Paul speaks about being baptized into Christ. Baptism, or immersion, then is a symbol for dying to the old and rising to the new as one enters into the Body of Christ as a member where the Risen Christ is the eternally contemporary head. The literature of the gospels indicates continually that baptism is the first thing undertaken by those who live toward the kingdom. It is the initial or initiation act.

In the service of worship baptism will have its place if the leader and the congregation emphasize that the service of worship itself signifies the creation of a community in which the person and the community come to their fulfillment in interdependence. A Christian congregation should be first to admit that it blinds itself by seeing itself as an aggregation of rugged individualists instead of a congregation of persons. In creative worship baptism will have its place as each week the congregation wrests itself from the old and lets itself become a channel for the new. Thoughtful interpretation of the order of worship can encourage this understanding.

Secondly witnessing a rite of entry into the Church makes one recall his own taking of vows and their growing or fading meaning. So the congregation participates even though only an individual stands before the minister and deacon at the front of the church.

For all Christians therefore baptism continues to be the point around which their personal piety has a common foundation. Each worshipper enters the service knowing that this act of congregational worship has its basis in the Risen Christ.

Specifically this is how personal piety may understand baptism: Baptism means the total going under, an immersion, with Christ and in faith in the Risen Christ who is greater than that to which we under go, death. The Christian admits that his own finitude is the seat of the problems within which he finds himself caught. But this finitude is not the cause of evil, for evil grows out of what happens in the person's anxiety about being finite. And the finite being can become a veil for the Risen Christ to which he has given himself. Not only this, but the Risen Christ is also greater than our escapes from finitude into nothingness.

Baptism serves as the function of introducing the believer to the foundation of his life and to the foundation of the church. As we elaborate the meaning of baptism, the rite itself will find a proper place within the worship service and bring the believer into a fuller understanding of himself with others before God.

—Ernest A. Rueter

THE MINISTER AND THE DENOMINATION

Editor: RICHARD P. CARTER
211 High Street
Suffield, Connecticut

WHAT WILL BE HAPPENING AT OMAHA?

by FRED S. BUSCHMEYER

I THINK IT WAS CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON, certainly a seasoned attendant at Council and Convention Meetings, who once observed that a meeting of the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches is unique among such denominational meetings in the United States. The uniqueness lies, he observed, in the fact that one of our General Council meetings is really a reflection of the whole life of the church. Instead of being almost exclusively a "legislative" meeting, there is the full round of worship, discussion, study and fellowship which marks the life of the average local church. The Omaha Council will follow this same pattern.

Proposed Union

What the outstanding event at Omaha will be will depend upon what a specific individual is most concerned about. The most vivid memory might be of the hot weather which sometimes comes to that part of the country, but the fact that the new Music Hall of the Civic Auditorium is air conditioned, as are many of the hotel rooms, should go a long way toward eliminating that possibility. Many of us hope with equal fervor that the discussion of the recommendations of the Executive Committee with regard to the long postponed consummation of the proposed Union will be free from any excessive heat. It appears at this date that the Executive Committee will provide the Council with as clear and unprejudiced a presentation of the outline of the development of the proposed Union as possible. It will also offer recommendations that are as clear and concise as possible. I think it is fair to observe (and certainly to hope) that the development of mutual understandings between people of all shades of personal preference in the last few months may very well make it possible for the Omaha Council to act with reasonable dispatch and lack of confusion on this important matter. Three or four extra hours of Business Sessions have been provided for, however, in the event that prolonged exposition or debate is called for.

Constitution

The report of the Commission on the Study of the Constitutional Problem will be of almost equal interest for many people, and of course may have considerable influence upon the minds of some people both with regard to the Union proposal and in connection with various proposed amendments to the Constitution of the General Council as offered at New Haven in 1954, some of which were specifically referred to this Commission. The fact that the Commission was composed of persons with widely varying points of view, yet was able to produce a unanimously approved report, would seem to be a happy omen of what the Council may think of its report.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Fred S. Buschmeyer is acting minister of the General Council, and as such has carried a large share of the burden of planning for the Omaha meetings.

John A. Harrer is librarian of The Congregational Library, 14 Beacon Street, Boston, and a Congregational minister.

Haystack Story

From the standpoint of uniqueness and probably from the standpoint of sheer drama it may be the American Board of Commissioners For Foreign Missions' presentation of the story of the Haystack Meeting, on Saturday evening in the Arena of the Auditorium, which will be the highlight of the Omaha Council. Miss Helen Kromer, who wrote the dramatic pageant for the World Council of Churches' Evanston Meeting, as well as two pageants for recent national Presbyterian USA meetings, has put the Haystack Meeting story into dramatic form. Those who have read the script say that it is superb. The Council will adjourn from the Music Hall to the Arena for this special feature. It is anticipated that church people from hundreds of miles around will plan on being in Omaha for this single feature of the Omaha Council if for nothing else.

Biennial Emphasis

The Haystack Meeting is furnishing both the theme for the Council Meeting and for the biennial emphasis which is to be recommended at Omaha for the years 1956-58, namely, "The Cause of Christ I Make My Own." Under this general theme, the Department of the Ministry has already been asked by the national Boards and Councils of the denomination to become the coordinator for the biennial emphasis whose sub-title might well be "Christian Leadership for the World, Through the Churches." It is devoutly to be hoped that a vivid recollection of the fruitful leadership which came out of the Haystack Meeting may produce a similar result in our fellowship of churches during the next two years and on into the future. The last night of the Council will be given over to the presentation of the needs and possibilities for such an emphasis, with Dr. Alford Carleton being the principal speaker.

Social Action

Another genuinely unique aspect of the Omaha Council will be the fact that on Wednesday morning, June 20th, The General Council and the Council for Social Action will join in an Open Hearing on the social resolutions which have been presented to our churches for study, and on such other social resolutions as may have been presented through the Resolutions Committee of the General Council. This recommended study and this Hearing are aimed at producing a maximum of enlightened judgment amongst us when we come to voting upon these social resolutions at the afternoon business session of the Council on Saturday, June 23rd.

Worship and Devotions

In the midst of all of these special features we will act like a local church in that we will also worship together regularly. The Chaplain for our daily devotional service will be the Rev. (Chaplain) Cloma Huffman, whose present assignment is with the Post Chapel at West Point, New York. It may be a unique experience for many people to be led in devotions by one of our ministers serving as a Chaplain in the U.S. Army. It will not be a unique experience for Chaplain Huffman, however, for at West Point he ministers regularly to a couple of thousand civilians and Army Personnel dependents. We are confident that these daily periods of devotion will be sources of spiritual strength and insight for many. The preacher for the Council Service of Worship on Sunday morning, June 24th, will be the Rev. T. Rutledge Beale, of our First Congregational Church in Billings, Montana, who is one of the finest preachers in our fellowship.

Seminar Sessions

As a means of getting Congregational Christian people from all over the country together to discuss those phases of church life in which they are most interested, or carry the largest measure of responsibility locally, there is nothing to take the place of the Seminar Sessions held on Thursday, Friday and Monday afternoons from two until four o'clock. There will be sixteen Seminar Groups this year covering almost every relevant concern of the local church. Unique in this listing will be the Seminar sponsored by the recently organized Congregational Christian Council of Theological Schools. The Department of the Ministry is sponsoring another Seminar in which it is hoped that all Conference and Association Registrars, as well as all Members of Conference and Association Committees on the Ministry will participate. It is our deep conviction that this Seminar offers a rare opportunity for us to share much information about the better ordering and strengthening of our ministry. Mutuality of understanding at this point of Conference and Association Committees on the Ministry can be of the greatest importance in the years immediately ahead of us should the Council act favorably upon the recommendations of the Executive Committee regarding the proposed Union.

Dr. Coe, Moderator

To attempt to pick out special items of probable interest at this or any other meeting of our General Council is obviously to slight the many other program, worship and business items which will be of great value and interest, even though perhaps not as unique as the items here mentioned. Not the least of the aspects of the Omaha Council which give us a happy sense of assurance that "decency, dignity, and fellowship" will prevail throughout our business sessions is the fact that the Rev. Albert Buckner Coe will be our Moderator. Since he was our unanimous choice to serve as Moderator at this historic meeting I would sincerely bespeak the prayers and cooperation of all of us that all our actions may reflect substantially the same kind of unanimity in spirit and support once the facts have been placed before us, the issues fairly debated, and the votes democraticly taken.

The Turn of The Tide

LORD OF THE CHANGING YEARS and changing circumstance, we thank thee that thou dost measure out the course of our lives in love and wisdom. We bless thee for our successes and happinesses, for the friends we have won and the work we have had to do. Give us grace to accept any altered estate we are brought to face without bitterness or complaint, deliver us from envy and maintain us in peace. In his name. Amen.

—G.G.A.

Describing a Resource for Your Ministry.

THE CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARY

by JOHN A. HARRER

A LIBRARY WORKER has an unusual and beneficial experience if daily duties afford an opportunity to examine newly published books. It is disappointing that only a few can be read. The remarkable factor is the steadiness of the stream of new ones, ever flowing from the printing presses. The many books which come into the Congregational Library offer a spiritual display one wishes ministers and church people might experience also. A little later we will indicate how this experience may be realized by anyone, or at least a reasonable facsimile of it. But now let's look at the books themselves. See that beauty, pick it up, turn to the pages of pictures. It is Ferguson's *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art.* That one with the dark red jacket has taken the attention of a throng, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* by Millar Burrows. So have others on the same subject by Edmund Wilson, and Dupont-Sommer. Interpretations of the Bible and history in the light of myth, legend and symbol have appeared in a great multitude which no man can number. Of these latter, ministers will do well to secure Amos N. Wilder's *New Testament Faith for Today,* the study of which may be continued with the books of Bultmann, Gogarten, Dillistone. John Scotford's new book is right over there, *When You Build Your Church.* An upstate New York church wants it, a church that possesses an established edifice to which no brick or beam has been added for seven generations. A youthful church in Pennsylvania, just born, also requests it. In addition, both these churches would like to receive Watkin's *Planning and Building the Modern Church.* Every church contemplating a new structure should examine the pamphlets of Elbert M. Conover, some of which the Library has had bound into a most useful volume.

A gem of a book is entitled *The Cradle of Our Faith,* by John C. Trever. Its delightful illustrations of the Holy Land are unusual and very colorful.

The problem of not being able to encompass so many books is also frustrating for the pastor who peruses reviews and advertisements. From the publishers come the books that stream away into oblivion, as if floating through the air. The parish minister is a very busy man. In a kind of dream, as if it were Alice in Wonderland, he reaches for one of the books but misses it. They are jetting by too swiftly.

"What shall I do?" he asks the Mad Hatter.

"Oh, you never can get them that way. Hasn't anyone taught you not to snatch?" the Mad Hatter interrogates.

"What must I do?" asks the bewildered divine.

"Simple enough," the Mad Hatter states. "Just leave your name and address and we will divert the stream to your house."

B.D.—"All those books? They will spill over my study floor and fill the room."

M.H.—"Why didn't you say so in the first place? We will divert just part of them. Tell us what you want. When they arrive, look them over. You may even want to read some of them, but mind you, send them back at the due date. After all, you aren't the only one who has been gazing without knowing what to do."

A certain minister determines to keep abreast of religious publications. "Of course I'm going to buy books but I would like to see many more than that," he wisely figures. Let such an astute

clergyman follow the Mad Hatter's advice. Send a letter to the Library naming twelve recent good books. Here is a curious thing. The person who requests books by mail has a little advantage over the nearer fellow. A book goes out automatically to names on the list. The man who arrives at the public desk is also permitted to enter his name as next in line. But the distant one who wrote a letter saying, "Please reserve the following books for me to be sent as available," is the wise man who got there first.

To watch the flow of new books that converge upon a library is an experience. Browsing in a book store has a similarity. There are two limitations. The reader can find time for only a few of them. And his desire to buy is partially checked by mundane demands upon his cash reserve, if any. He will be driven both to secure those that will add to his personal library and to borrow many more. What a boon then is the Congregational Library! A minister may obtain the most learned and the most talked-of books.

Questions people ask of a library are exemplified by books already mentioned. Sending a book that has the answer is best for the sender and the receiver. A senior deacon who describes himself as unworthy of such an office requires a book on a constitution for a church which is changing from the traditional dichotomous organization of parish and church to become one body. The reply to that letter is easy for it is described in the Congregational Manual by Oscar Maurer. From California a request has been received for books of pastoral prayers. A theological student close by is writing a paper on, of all things, *Presbyterianism in New England*. The Superintendent of the Michigan Conference has asked for an article on the Congregational Library. Perhaps all the other Conference Ministers might want the same. If the Psalmist's heavenly line goes out into all the earth, so do the lines of the Congregational Library fan out into every state between the two broad oceans.

When the issue of the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY containing the Associates in Reading List arrives at the Library it is examined at once to determine whether the chosen books have been purchased and are ready to lend. Of the recent list none was missing. All four on the main list and all eight on the supplementary list had been purchased and were ready to lend.

The BULLETIN OF THE CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARY contains a list of the most recent accessions. If the studious preacher reserves a small space on his book shelves where the Bulletins may be saved, he will have at hand a useful guide to the religious literature of recent years. The accumulated Bulletins become an excellent tool for the minister's workshop. If he has not considered saving them with that in mind, he might like to begin with the next issue. The bulletin is mailed to those who request it.

OUR LEARNED CLERGY

There are various reasons why the United States is less of a book-reading country than many others. Chief among these, perhaps, is our greater addition to newspapers and magazines.

We, more than any other people, have fallen prey to that aspect of modern life. Among the professions, the clergy alone have escaped it; they read more widely today, I suspect, than the members of any other profession. I am thinking particularly of our doctors, our lawyers, our teachers. The bulk of their reading is necessarily professional.

J. DONALD ADAMS
New York Times Book Review

CURRENT BOOKS ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF EXISTENCE

by WILLIAM L. BRADLEY

THERE IS SUCH WIDESPREAD INTEREST in existential philosophy amongst Americans today that it may be well to chart a course for those ministers whose pocketbooks do not permit them to buy every new book that comes on the market. What are the better survey books on the subject, what books written by the existentialists themselves are most worth the reading, and what works are especially pertinent to theological studies?

Many introductory books have appeared in recent years, some good and some inferior in quality. One of the better introductions (Cochrane's *Existentialists and God*) appears on this quarter's reading list. Two excellent books are E. L. Allen's *Existentialism from Within,* and Emmanuel Mournier's *Existentialist Philosophies.* Perhaps the most adequate introduction, however, is written by a Catholic philosopher, James Collins, and is entitled, *The Existentialists.* A recent thorough study, of a more scholarly sort, is John Wild's *Challenge of Existentialism.*

My own preference is for books by the existentialists themselves, and these are becoming available in greater quantity than formerly. Some, like the novels and plays of Sartre, demonstrate a unique approach to philosophy. Try his early novel, *Nausea,* or his play, *No Exit,* and you will find yourself being led into a world totally different from the natural environment which previously had constituted the world of the philosopher. *The Stranger,* a novel by Camus, who is not existentialist but writes in similar vein, gives a picture of emotionless, amoral, modern European man which is both terrifying and desperately challenging. None of Heidegger's books appears in translation, but a collection of four important essays is published as *Existence and Being,* and contains the kernel of his concept of Nothingness, so significant in all existential thinking. Jaspers is represented by many titles: *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy* and *Way to Wisdom* are representative. Marcel's Gifford Lectures, *The Mystery of Being,* are inferior to his earlier diary, which appears under the titles, *Metaphysical Diary* and *Being and Having.* Of course Kierkegaard cannot be neglected here: *Fear and Trembling, The Concept of Dread, Philosophical Fragments,* and *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* are among his best. A new look at

(*Continued on next page*)

EDITOR'S NOTES

The reading lists and reviews in this section are prepared by the Committee of Associates in Reading of the Department of the Ministry.

William L. Bradley is on the faculty of Hartford Seminary Foundation, Hartford, Connecticut.

Nietzsche (*Thus Spake Zarathustra* and *Beyond Good and Evil*) would be well advised, as would a study of Pascal's *Pensees*.

There are many books of particular interest to the minister in his theological studies. The Bultmann controversy is discussed in Bultmann's *Theology of the New Testament,* Bartsch's symposium entitled, *Kerygma and Myth* (recommended in the last issue of the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY, Gogarten's *Demythologizing and History,* and—in brief but thorough form —Henderson's *Myth in the New Testament.* Tillich's theology has existentialist features, as one can see easily in *The Courage to Be* and *The Shaking of the Foundations.* Barth, also, though opposed to Tillich in many respects, shows the influence of Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and more recently Sartre. Otto Weber's summary, *Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics,* might well stand on every minister's shelf.

Most existentialist thinkers dislike the term *"Existentialism,"* because this is to make a metaphysical system of a novel approach to the nature of man in existence—existence which is never closed, never a system, but always incomplete and open to the future. The pessimism of a Sartre or Heidegger is essentially moral in nature, for it calls upon men to take responsibility for what they are and may become. One thing is apparent: even the atheistic existentialists lean heavily upon Christian theology, and in many ways understand it more fully than do those Christians who never ask questions about their world, their faith, or their destiny.

RECOMMENDED READING

Primary List

New Testament Faith for Today, by Amos N. Wilder. Harpers, $2.50

The professor of New Testament Interpreation of Harvard Divinity School has again put us in his debt in a profound and exciting volume which grapples with the fact, both frustrating and challenging, that the understanding of the Gospel continues to "mystify and repel men." Underlining the necessity which confronts every contemporary herald of the good news to translate the basic meanings of the New Testament into our modern categories, he indicates the manner in which these more familiar frames of reference must in their own turn be baptized and corrected by the basic faith and message of the gospel itself. A supreme and radical example of this essential process is provided for us in the witness of the Fourth Gospel. Here the writer utilizes the pagan (extra-Christian) conceptions and thought patterns of his contemporaries in order to "communicate" his message, but at the same time incorporates them into the unique world historical scheme of the Bible itself.

In two masterful chapters, Wilder adequately defends his thesis that both the proclamation of Jesus and the message of Paul are the same good news, namely, that God's final salvation is under way and is available. Both the evangelists and Paul conveyed this common message in terms appropriate to the living context in which they did their preaching and teaching. The New Testament images of redemption were "mythopoetic" in nature, taking us beyond the literal to the actual, disclosing to us ultimate realities in the only adequate language faith can employ as it grapples with first things and last things. But the message was basically the same message.

A recurring theme, and a key to the understanding of the Christian message, is that Christianity "whether in its origins or in the present cannot be abstracted into a 'religious' dimension but relates itself to the total life, indeed, the public life of men."

The author takes care to remind the complacent churchman that the pagan or blasphemer "who feels the acuteness of our moral predicament or who has an imaginative grasp of our human transiency" is better qualified to understand Jesus and Paul than many Christians.

The Congregational Ministry in the Modern World, by H. Cunliffe-Jones. Independent Press, $1.25; **The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry,** by H. Richard Niebuhr. Harpers, $2.50

These two volumes have been selected and placed together; the one from America, the other from Britain; the one dealing with the philosophical and theological bases of discussions of the church, the ministry and theological education; the other a more popular series on the ministry in the Congregational fellowship.

Dr. Niebuhr, in collaboration with Daniel Day Williams and James M. Gustafson, with whom he is making a study of theological education in the United States and Canada, has divided his first volume of this report into three sections:

1. The church and its purpose;
2. The emerging new conception of the ministry;
3. The idea of a theological school.

The analysis of the present confused state of mind in regard to these matters is searching, yet sympathetic and helpful. The conclusion as to the purpose of the church today as ever to fulfill the great commandments to love God and man, the evaluation of the ministry with the term "pastoral director" in line with the needs of the hour, and the breadth yet sharpness of the theory of Theological Education—all merit the concern of churchmen of our day.

THE CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY, being a series by alumni of Yorkshire Independent College, is an excellent companion volume. Every chapter, written by a personal friend of some American Congregationalists, with a suitable foreword from the pen of Dr. Leslie E. Cooke, reveals the deep insights and practical devotion of our British colleagues.

The Dead Sea Scrolls, by Millar Burrows. Viking Press, $6.50

In 1947 a Bedouin boy was the unwitting revealer of "the greatest manuscript discovery in modern times." Nothing in centuries has so excited the minds of Old Testament scholars. Much of this feeling has reached the interest of the general public. The original discovery of those unearthed later have become known, somewhat erroneously but conveniently, as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Numerous articles and at least one other "best seller" book have furnished glimpses into the subject. But the minister will want to be informed to a greater extent than these offer.

Much work, of course, remains to be done, for some of the dried scrolls have not yet been unrolled. Fortunately, the American Schools of Oriental Research had early access to some of the manuscripts and were

able to appreciate their importance. Dr. Burrows is in the best position, not only to clarify the facts regarding the findings and their significance in Biblical research, but also to convey some of the thrill such discoveries naturally arouse.

Here is evidence that fact can indeed be more exciting, if not stranger, than fiction. The enlightened minister will find this book to be "must" reading. He who would study further will find the comprehensive bibliography included in this volume a thorough guide.

The Moral Decision, by Edmond Cahn. Indiana University Press, 1955, $5.00

Mr. Cahn, practicing lawyer for twenty-three years and, for the past six years a Professor of Law at New York University, writes this book in which each chapter is headed by a legal case history in answer to the question, "What moral guides can be found in American Law?"

As the reader speeds his way through well-written chapters on Sexual Relationships, The Conduct of Business, Business with Government and The Enlargement of Personality, he gains a new respect for American jurisprudence and has some long thoughts about "The Moral Decision."

This book would be excellent as a basis for discussion among ministers and it has been demonstrated to be meeting ground for ministers and lawyers.

Supplementary List

The Existentialists and God, by Arthur E. Cochrane. Westminster Press, $3.00

Perhaps no term occurs more frequently in theological discussions today than "existentialism." This book discusses the concepts of Being of the following: Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre, Tillich, Gilson, and Barth. The best brief survey of this important subject this reviewer has read.

Christ and His Church, by Anders Nygren, Bishop of Lund (translated by Alan Carlston). Westminster Press, $2.50

The best review of this penetrating little volume, based on the first Laidlaw Lectures given at Knox College, Toronto, can be provided by a key sentence in the author's own words: "As Christ is a part of the gospel and is its real content, and as the Church, by reason of its unity with Christ, belongs also to the gospel, therefore the Church's essential unity is also an inevitable part of the gospel itself." This great ecumenical leader believes that "many stones can be removed from the path of the Church's ecumenical venture if we make clear in what the Church's true unity consists." The good bishop removes many a stone, and with a minimum of theological verbiage clarifies our continuing quest to discover our unity in the ONE Christ.

Modern Rivals to Christian Faith, by Cornelius Loew. Westminster Press, $1.00

The most pertinent question one needs to ask is not "am I religious?", but "what sort of a religion do I have? What God do I worship?" This small book examines our contemporary answers to these questions. It opens them for discussion rather than providing the answers. He deals with such matters as making a religion out of science, democracy, and popular health philosophies.

The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology, by George S. Hendry. Westminster Press, $2.50

You can no more define the Holy Spirit than you can a sunset. It's truth is in its presence in a person, in a revelation. But you can examine the evidence of its presence in history, which this book does adequately, and with clarity. It deals with a timely topic in current religious thinking.

Caesar the Beloved Enemy, by M. A. C. Warren. S. C. M. Press, London, 1955, 75c

Consisting of three studies in the Relation of Church and State, this little pamphlet turns out to be a profound Missionary Tract for our time. Canon Warren is gaining a wide hearing in this country with his books which include "The Christian Mission" and "The Christian Imperative" published recently by Scribners.

The Cross in the Old Testament, by H. Wheeler Robinson. Westminster Press, $3.00

This reprint in one volume of (1) The Cross of Job; (2) The Cross of the Servant; and (3) The Cross of Jeremiah, is a rich contribution to the better appreciation of these ancient themes in the light of our Christian Gospel and experience.

The Gift of Power, by Lewis Joseph Sherrill. MacMillan, 1955, $3.00

The power and the glory possible in Christian Education is revealed in this book. Following a clear analysis of "the self," the threat to that self, the author traces man in his "divine encounter" in the Christian community; Dr. Sherrill reveals man's predicament, his possibility of communication through symbols, how the self changes and then finally presents both methods and materials to explain the "dynamics of becoming." Read it slowly—it is excellent; apply it faithfully—it is practical; then find the Power—it is possible.

The British Weekly (Magazine Review)

In keeping with our recent decision to point our fellow pastors to the most helpful religious magazines, we enthusiastically add "The British Weekly" to our list of enthusiastic recommendations. Under the inspired and fearless editorship of Shaun Herron, this interdenominational weekly —the "Christian Century" of Britain—has taken on new stature. It has all the excitement of its American counterpart, splendid coverage of news around the world, plus a riper journalistic wisdom and style. The format leaves something to be desired, but this is amply compensated by the quality of the content. William Barclay's page for preachers and teachers, including his Biblical "Word Book" column, is invaluable. Address: 11 Buckingham Street, Adelphi, London, W. C. 2. The price: Fourpence per copy.

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Excerpts—

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(4) **About worship with small groups, poor facilities, "where the minister has to create the atmosphere, etc."** Along with the growing and essentially worthy idea of "enriching worship" which has been much emphasized lately has come the idea that without all these material aids proper worship is impossible. Bosh!

I was fortunate to learn this early in my ministry by conducting worship in a room which was a dance hall until the wee small hours of Sunday morning. When a devoted mother had finished sweeping out the place on Sunday sometimes dust still hung in the air but her devotion created all the atmosphere that we needed for worship. Such devotion inspired me more than might a fine organ and a vested choir unless equal devotion went with them.

If I had not learned this early I would have learned it as a chaplain conducting worship under every sort of unusual condition. Our bare hospital chapel overseas with room down front for the wheel chairs and in the rear for the rolling litters, with folding chairs spaced unevenly to accommodate leg casts, had an atmosphere of worship which many a richly appointed church never achieves.

But this must be said. Though the material surroundings may be informal this is no reason for the minister being other than dignified and reverent. It is a reason why he should be more so.

And this must be added. The minister does not create the atmosphere of worship, the worshippers do. The minister only does his part, which is not small.

(5) **About the pastoral prayer.** Personally I have never been able to make a "vital transaction" of a pastoral prayer written by someone else and read by me. I dare not say however that anything is impossible.

I always write out my pastoral prayer in full. There have been weeks when this has taken as much time as the preparation of the sermon. I seldom follow it as written. To have it written keeps me from "vain repetitions" of favorite phrases. It also gives me an outline of thought suitable to the sermon and the day, and gives me terminal facilities. Almost every Sunday I leave my outline and add something in the spirit of the moment, omitting something I had written, not forgetting to stop.

I cannot not say that every pastoral prayer seems a "vital transaction" at the time, but many of them I feel deeply in my own heart. Others who have shared them with me often testify the same.

No matter what we do or think in regard to any of these items, there will be days when we wonder if it all is worthwhile. But there will also be other wonderful days when someone says something which makes us realize that our efforts are not wasted. And, after all, what else is there we would want to do, except be a minister?

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The Greatness of Gentleness

LORD, LET US EVER BE COURTEOUS, easy to be entreated and desirous to be reconciled. So may the wisdom from above guide and heal us and may thy gentleness to us, who need it so much and try it so sorely, establish our spirits. In his Name, who was thy gentleness among us. Amen.

—G.G.A.